Reconfiguring archives in shifting national, political and cultural contexts in the North Atlantic and Scandinavia

National archives of Norway
The Danish-Norwegian archive dispute

▶ **Background**

▶ Norway was separated from Denmark after the Napoleonic wars, in 1814.

▶ The peace treaty had regulations regarding archives.

▶ Denmark should hand over archives that was necessary for administrative purposes.
Phases in the discussions

It is possible to distinct several phases in the negotiations:

1. 1820-1823
2. 1848-1851
   • 1898 and 1911
3. 1923-1939
4. 1945-2000
Phase 1 (1820-1823)

- Norwegian negotiations directly with the ministries archival services.
- Received archival series with solely Norwegian content.
- Documents sorted out from mixed archival series.
- In total 2,000 shelf metres.
Phase 2 (1848-1851)

- Norwegian claim for medieval charters.
- Negotiations between the Danish and Norwegian National Archivist.
- Claims on additional medieval charters.
- Norway gave up further claims.
Phase 3 (1923-1939)

- Broad political involvement.
- A period with strong Danish sentiment in Norway.
- Much public attention.
- Difficulties with the National Archives.
- Transfer of archives in the form of gifts.
Phase 4 (1945-2000)

- Political initiative.
- Negotiations between the two National Archives.
- In total 207,000 registered claims.
- The Norwegian government records were handed over as a gift.
- An additional microfilming project.
A new claim (2018)

The remaining medieval charters in the Arnamagnæan institute.

The National Archives has got copies of all the documents.

From archives in Norway (bishops etc).

Uncertain outcome.
The Swedish-Norwegian Archive dispute (ca. 1890-1953)

- Dispute regarding border map and treaties only pertaining Norway.
- Negotiations between the Ministries of foreign affairs.
- The archives were transferred in the form of gifts.

Map showing the Norwegian-Russian border 1825.
Reflections

- The archives in the Danish and Swedish Ministries from the time of the unions are examples of shared archival heritage.

- The collection of archives at the Arnamagnæan Institute are typical examples of displaced archives.

- The archival dispute was high on the political agenda. Especially in periods when the relationship with the former union partners.

- Archival principals played a significant role, especially the principle of provenance. But the principal was largely misinterpreted, especially in Norway.